(b) if so, the reaction of Government thereto;

(c) whether Government have taken any steps to prevent such "bird flu" in India; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI DALTI EZHILMALAI): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. A strain of influenza virus previously known to only infect birds was isolated from a three years old child in May, 1997 in Hong Kong. Thirteen confirmed, and six suspected cases of influenza due to virus strain H5N1 have been reported from Hong Kong.

(c) and (d) Short term and long term measures have been taken to prevent the inadvertent ingress of avian Influenza (Bird Flu) into India. These include a ban on import of domestic and wild birds from countries. Where the diseases was reported, monitoring and Surveillance measuers and observance of strict quarantine measures on the import of poultry and poultry products.

Necessary test kits have been obtained from centres for Disease Control, Atlanta, USA, and facilities for Laboratory tests are available at National Institute of Virology, Pune and National Institute of Communicable Diseases in the unlikely event of an outbreak.

National Institute of Communicable Disease, Delhi has already alerted the State health authorities in the country in January, 1998.

Law to Ban Human Cloning

3437. SHRIMATI MALTI SHARMA: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received any communication from ICMR requesting to enact a law banning human cloning;

(b) if so, the details of the proposal of ICMR; and

(c) Government's reaction to the communication from ICMR?

THE MINISTER OF STETE OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI DALIT EZHILMALAI): (a) to (c) DA Draft Consultative Document on Ethical Guidelines on Biomedical Research involving Human subjects had been prepared by the Central Ethical Committee of ICMR. One of the major areas covered by this document related to Human Genetics wherein a ban on Human cloning by law has been suggested. This document has been circulated to leading Scientific and Non-Scientific Institutions/Organisations medical Colleges, State Health Departments. Faculty of Law, Journalists and other eminent citizens of the country inviting their comments. Government will take a view after the ICMR finalises their approach based on the comments received.

Opening of New CGHS Homeopathic Units in Delhi

3438. SHRIMATI BASANTI SARMA: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have failed in providing an efficient and meaningful medical care and services to CGHS beneficiaries by not opening more C.G.H.S. Homeopathic units in Delhi since 1986 due to resources and infrastructural constraints;

(b) whether demands for establishment of CGHS Homeopathic units in Delhi are continuing till date; and

(c) if so, the reasons for not giving amphasis to the development of I.S.M. and Homoepathy and opening of units under CGHS?